

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 EB-08 COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01

AID-05 IGA-02 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 /041 W

-----241142Z 074332 /21

R 241030Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1763

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSYMANIOA

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 TEHRAN 2573

DEPT PLEASE PASS DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB USIRJC

SUBJ: CONVERSATION WITH DEPUTY MINISTER OF LABOR

FERIDOUN NASSERI

1. SUMMARY: IN DISCUSSION WITH DEPUTY MINISTER OF LABOR
USIRJC OFFICER REVIEWED CURRENT STATUS OF IRAN'S EXPATRIATE
MANPOWER PROGRAMS. GOI PLANS TO RECRUIT BETWEEN 7,000 AND
12,000 ASIAN EXPATRIATE WORKERS WITHIN THE NEXT MONTH AND
HAVE THEM ON THE JOB BY SEPTEMBER OR OCTOBER. GOI WILL
RECRUIT SKILLED WORKERS AND PROFESSIONALS FROM PAKISTAN,
INDIA, INDONESIA, THE PHILIPPINES, AND THE REPUBLIC OF
KOREA. NASSERI EXPRESSED GOI'S SATISFACTION WITH ON-
GOING RECRUITMENT PROGRAMS WITH ASIAN COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY
WITH THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA AND THE PHILIPPINES. END SUMMARY.

2. USIRJC OFFICER CALLED ON DEPUTY MINISTER OF LABOR
NASSERI TO DELIVER FIVE REMAINING COPIES OF WARZECHA
STUDY MORNING OF MARCH 20. AFTER EXCHANGE OF USUAL
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PLEASANTRIES AND IRANIAN NEW YEAR GREETINGS. EMBOFF
AND NASSERI DISCUSSED AT CONSIDERABLE LENGTH IRAN'S
ONGOING AND FUTURE PROGRAMS TO RECRUIT ASIAN WORKERS.

3. THE MINISTRY OF LABOR IS SENDING THE LARGEST DELE-
GATION IN ITS HISTORY ON A TOUR OF FIVE ASIAN NATIONS
IN APRIL. THE DELEGATION WILL VISIT PAKISTAN,

INDIA, INDONESIA, THE PHILIPPINES AND THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA. THE DELEGATION'S GOAL IS TO RECRUIT AND HAVE ON THE JOB BEFORE WINTER NEARLY 7,000 EXPATRIATE WORKERS. DR. NASSERI ADDED THAT IF THEY WERE PARTICULARLY FORTUNATE THEY MAY HAVE AS MANY AS 12,000. THE MINISTRY OF LABOR WILL BE RECRUITING SEMI-SKILLED AND SKILLED TECHNICIANS AS WELL AS PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL, WITH PARTICULAR ATTENTION BEING GIVEN TO THE MEDICAL PROFESSION.

4. THE GOVERNMENT OF IRAN HAS ONGOING MANPOWER RECRUITMENT PROGRAMS WITH ALL FIVE OF THE ABOVE MENTIONED COUNTRIES EXCEPT INDONESIA. THIS WILL BE IRAN'S FIRST COOPERATIVE MANPOWER PROJECT RECRUITING INDONESIANS AND IRAN HOPES TO RECRUIT PRIMARILY SKILLED OIL REFINERY PERSONNEL. WHILE THE MOL WILL OVERSEE RECRUITMENT IN INDONESIA, REFINERY TECHNICIANS WILL BE HIRED BY FLUOR FOR THEIR REFINERY IN ISFAHAN. THE MINISTRY HOPES TO FIND SKILLED REFINERY PERSONNEL WHO WILL BE MORE CULTURALLY SUITED TO LIFE IN IRAN THAN OTHER ASIAN EXPATRIATE WORKERS.

5. EMBOFF ASKED NASSERI WITH WHICH OF THE FOUR REMAINING ASIAN COUNTRIES DID IRAN FEEL ITS MANPOWER RECRUITMENT PROGRAMS WERE MOST SUCCESSFUL. NASSERI SAID WITHOUT A DOUBT PERSONNEL RECRUITED IN THE PHILIPPINES APPEAR TO BE THE MOST EFFICIENT WORKERS AND CAUSED THE FEWEST AMOUNT OF PROBLEMS FOR THE IRANIAN GOVERNMENT, THOUGH PROGRAMS WITH THE ROK WERE EQUALLY SUCCESSFUL. HIS SILENCE ABOUT PROGRAMS WITH INDIAN AND PAKISTAN SPOKE FOR ITSELF.
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ACTION NEA-10

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AID-05 IGA-02 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00
LAB-04 SIL-01 /046 W

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R 141030Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
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AMEMBASSY MANILA
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 TEHRAN 2573

DEPT PLEASE PASS DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

NASSERI POINTED OUT THAT ALL FOREIGNERS HAVE AN ADJUSTMENT PROBLEM IN IRAN, ADMITTING THAT TEHRAN IN PARTICULAR WAS A DIFFICULT CITY IN WHICH TO LIVE. QUOTE EVEN IRANIANS HAVE A HARD TIME HERE, UNQUOTE HE SAID. BUT, HE POINTED OUT THAT BOTH FILIPINOS AND KOREANS HAD RELATIVELY FEW LABOR COMPLAINTS, ALMOST ALL WERE RECRUITED FOR SPECIFIC JOBS IN IRAN, AND PERFORMED THEM COMPETENTLY. IN ADDITION, HE POINTED OUT, THEY SEEMED TO LIVE SOBER LIVES, RARELY GETTING INVOLVED IN LABOR DISPUTES OR IN CIVIL DISPUTES WITH THEIR NEIGHBORS. NASSERI DID SAY, HOWEVER, THAT IN INSTANCES WHERE LARGE GROUPS OF FILIPINOS AND KOREANS, PARTICULARLY AT A LOWER SKILL LEVEL, WORK VERY CLOSELY WITH LARGE NUMBERS OF IRANIANS THERE HAVE BEEN PROBLEMS OF CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT. IN PARTICULAR, THE EAST ASIANS TEND TO BE MORE SENSITIVE ABOUT PERSONAL HYGIENE THAN THEIR IRANIAN CO-WORKERS AND MANY IRANIAN EMPLOYERS HAVE HAD TO ESTABLISH SEPARATE WASH AND RESTROOMS FOR THE KOREAN AND FILIPINO WORKERS. CONFIDENTIAL

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6. INDIAN AND PAKISTANI WORKERS HAVE A MORE DIFFICULT TIME ADJUSTING IN IRAN. THE MINISTRY OF LABOR FEELS THIS IS IN PART DUE TO A LONG ESTABLISHED PREJUDICE IN IRAN AGAINST SOUTH ASIANS. MOREOVER THE MINISTRY FEELS THAT THE INDIAN AND PAKISTANI GOVERNMENTS DO NOT TAKE THE SAME CARE AS THEIR FILIPINO AND KOREAN COLLEAGUES IN RECRUITING PERSONNEL FOR JOBS IN IRAN. THUS, MANY WORKERS ARRIVE HERE WITH INAPPROPRIATE SKILLS FOR THE JOBS THEY ARE EXPECTED TO DO, AND, IN SOME CASES, THEY ARE OVER-EDUCATED FOR THE POSITIONS THEY ARE TO FILL. THIS SITUATION CAUSES TENSION ON THE JOB AND EVENTUALLY DISPUTES WITH THE EMPLOYER.

7. WITHOUT DIRECT REFERENCE TO THE NEARLY HALF MILLION SOUTH ASIANS ILLEGALLY WORKING IN IRAN NASSERI MADE A POINT OF EXPLAINING THAT THE GOI WILL SOON BEGIN MUCH TIGHTER CONTROLS ON ENTRY OF UNSKILLED FOREIGNERS

INTO IRAN. THE MOL HAS IN ALL OF ITS EXPATRIATE RECRUITMENT PROGRAMS DIRECTED THEM TOWARD FILLING POSITIONS THAT CANNOT BE FILLED BY IRANIANS AND IN AREAS THAT WILL NOT CAUSE POPULAR RESENTMENT BY EMPLOYMENT OF FOREIGNERS. THERE IS GROWING RESENTMENT AMONG UNSKILLED AND SEMI-SKILLED IRANIAN WORKERS AGAINST THE LARGE NUMBER OF SOUTH ASIANS, PARTICULARLY PAKISTANI, WHO HAVE ENTERED IRAN ILLEGALLY AND WORK FOR CONSIDERABLY LOWER SALARIES THAN IRANISNS. ALLUDING TO A USIRJC TRAINING PROJECT CONDUCTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR LAST YEAR FOR IRAN'S DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR THE RECRUITMENT OF EXPATRIATES, NASSERI SAID THAT THE GOI HOPES, THROUGH CLOSER COOPERATION BETWEEN MOL, CUSTOMS AUTHORITIES, AND POLICE, IRAN WILL BE ABLE TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF ILLEGAL WORKERS.

8. EMBOFF ASKED NASSERI WHICH OF THE VARIOUS NATIONALITIES, WHICH MAKE UP IRAN'S RELATIVELY LARGE EX-CONFIDENTIAL

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PATRIATE LABOR FORCE, HAD THE MOST DIFFICULT TIME ADJUSTING. NASSERI REPLIED THAT IN TERMS OF THOSE EXPATRIATE WORKERS WHO BROUGHT DISPUTES BEFORE THE MINISTRY'S LABOR RELATIONS BOARD WITHOUT A DOUBT THE AMERICANS SEEMED TO HAVE THE MOST DIFFICULTY UNDERSTANDING THEY LIVED IN ANOTHER COUNTRY NOT GOVERNED BY THEIR OWN LAWS, WITH INDIANS A CLOSE SECOND. EAST ASIANS, AGAIN HE POINTED OUT, SEEMED TO HAVE FEWER DISPUTES WITH THEIR EMPLOYERS AND HE SAID THIS MAY BE DUE TO THEIR WILLINGNESS TO SETTLE DISPUTES OUTSIDE A FORMAL JUDICIAL OR BUREAUCRATIC OFFICE. MIKLOS

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